15 Words 15c % Farmer Classified Ads % Phone 1208

EDWIN BALMER

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(Continued.)

A girl's voice suddenly rose in a reckless, excited exclamation which Jim could not make out, but at which man laughed. Another with a deep. vy voice-it was not the voice of "sir" who had visited the rear m-rebuked the girl, and there was silonce. Jim gained the front of the dining room. Velvet hangings half covered the doorway, which opened into a front hall. Directly across this hall was another room, lighted and evidently much larger than the dining -a salon with delicate paper and pretty gilded chandellers and wall lights, with gracefre table and chairs and with a grand piano of a corresponding style. Brocaded curtains were drawn close over the windows, and at the larger table near the center of the room and also at a smaller table at the side men and wemen were

There was a heap of papers upon one end of the larger table, and a tall nan, who stood with his back to the door, sorted over this pile, put some ets aside and passed others along the table, giving a verbal direction with each. In some cases the direction was brief-only a word or twoin other instances it was longer, and twice while Jim watched the tall man self bent and wrote upon the pas which he took from the pile.

Jim could see as the sheets were held up that they already hore writing. There was no possible question of the nature of the work going on. Under the direction of the tall men at the large table the others were preparing letters of the sort found on ingour's body. The papers in the pfle which the tail man was sorting were ndoubtedly, just the ordinary form ters of life insurance solicitation, and the great majority of them would nain no more than that. They ould be addressed to persons who ad no connection with the plots of the regent's agents, and they would be offered life insurance in the regular manner if they applied for it at triatt's office. The letters which the tall man passed down the table untionably looked the same as the others, but they were addressed to "I went to the office from the staoles, and at the tall man's direction ders were being written in invisible fuld between the typewritten lines, orders which the spies would develop by some chemical.

Jim crouched and crept closer, forgetting his impulse merely to attempt scape. If he could cause the capture of those in the rooms across the hall would have the chief of the reit's spies there, together with the its of the agents and designation of work each was ordered to do. The letters, between the lines of which the secret instructions how were being written, evidently had been at Marlatt's office when he had learned after midnight of developments which made it imperative for him to issue nev orders, so Marlatt had gone to his ffice and directed another to meet him there. When Jim had surprised them they had overpowered him and brought him unconscious to this house where they had impressed the family to the work required.

And more than the family of this house were at work. Two men besides the tall man at the end were writing at the larger table. Three wo men assisted them. At the smaller able were a young man and two girls. ariier hours of the night at a dance or some formal entertainment. The young man was in evening clothes, and both the girls were decollete. One of these girls faced the door, and as she looked up and laughed at some remark of the young man's Jim stared, He knew that girl. He knew her ot as an acquaintance, but as one whose picture often appeared in papers accompanying accounts of social affairs, one who was pointed out at the opera or among the spectators at a polo or tennis match. Where he had seen her Jim could not remember, but that he had seen her under some such conditions and that she was one of the popular debutantes of the year before he was certain.

The sight of her laughing and bantering with the man across the table from her struck Jim aghast. Could such as she be there among the spies of the regent planning betrayal of the country, or since he had broken into the office in the city had be been going upon some horrible mistake and could it be that these people had proper business of their own together there in that guarded house at a quarter to four in the morning? He had no need to summon remembrance of Ingouf's body beside the road, the first shot fred at him and the rest of the fight in the office, the ropes about his arms as he recovered consciousness. assurance. She called to the tall man at the other table: "And Vettis of Aurora-what did you say he was to enter? Artillery?

"Aviation corps, if Illinois sends one," the tall man corrected curtly. He's not to try to communicate with us at all after this until he is in the Secret Service to Rescue.

IM retreated farther behind the velvet port'eres. Somewhere on that first floor and probably in the rear of the hall there must be a telephone, and a plan suddenly had matured in his mind. He stole noiselessly to the other door of the dining room and peered again into the ill lit rear hall. Everything the quiet there. The silence at the door of the den told that Bole was still securely bound and could not have succeeded in removing the gag. Jim went past the den and found another door. He opened it and looked into a kitchen entry. He went further and found another door. This opened into a closet which was dark until the door was closed again. Then an electric light burned overhead, and Jim found himself facin a little desk upon which a telephone stood. The number of the telephone was printed upon a paper strip under the nickel guard of the transmitter. A Chicago city directory was upon the desk, and Jim, laying down Bole's revolver, opened the book. He turned to S. D. Marlatt's name and read the telephone number opposite his residence address. It did not correspond with that upon the instru-This residence, then, was not Mar-

latt's. Jim lifted the receiver and called the number given in the book as Marlatt's office. Sibert and his men could not have visited Marlatt's office and gone away before he got there. If they went to the office at all they must have arrived after Mariatt and his companion had taken Jim away. In that case Sibert might be at the office now. Jim heard the burr of the ringing signal, but twice before some one at the other end of the wire answered. It was not Sibert's voice unless it was

much disguised. "Who is this?" Jim asked. The voice repeated Mariatt's office number. If the man at the other end was a spy he was being cautious. If he was one of the secret service men be evidently believed that one of Marlatt's agents must be calling. Jim spoke quickly. "Is Mr. Sibert there?"

other end seemed not to have heard "If he is there tell him this is James Ashby, whom he met tonight. Tell him to come to the phone, and I will

"Mr. Sibert there?" The man at the

"Describe Robert Wendell!" The voice at the other end altered suddenly to Sibert's. Jim complied quickly. Sibert interrupted him after an instant. "Well,

prove It.

grimly.

Ashby, what is it?" "I am at --- " Jim read the num-ber of his telephone to Sibert. "It is a large, fashionable house, Sibert. I de not know what the names of the people are or where it is, but I believe it is not Mariatt's"

"One of my men is now calling central on another phone to find out where you are talking from, Go on!" Sibert directed.

"I supposed so," Sibert commented

"I would have walted for you, but I saw a light. Some one was up there. I went in and was attacked! There were two men, Sibert. They knocked me out and carried me away. They carried away everything they wanted from the office too. I was tied when I came to myself, but I got loose. I'm free in the house now, and they don't know it." Swiftly he related what he

Sibert gave him directions curtly. We know where you are. You're about a mile north of the river and two blocks from the lake. We will be there within ten minutes. If they've guards outside, as you say, we can't surprise those inside. You are to watch what they do with their lists and other papers, and if they try to destroy them stop them. Take a chance. After you hear a disturbance outside you can count upon our coming in within thirty seconds. Understand?"

"I understand." The receiver at the other end was hung up. Jim sat still, listening. Some one was passing in the hall-a man hy the heaviness of the tread-and then there was silence. Nothing indicated that any one had heatd the talking at the telephone, but Jim waited in the closet before he opened the door. Finding the rear hall empty, he crossed to the dining room. He hid toward the center of the big room now, contenting himself with listening to the voices of those in the salon and not trying to see for fear himself of being seen. With Sibert and his men coming the essential thing was to keep himself free to act when the crisis came. The work of the men and the women in t'e salon seemed to be proceeding in the same manner as a few minutes before. Then the tall man, who was directing the others, stepped into the hall. He went directly back to the smoking room, in which Jim had been confined, and, trying the knob, he exclaimed, with surprise, at finding the door locked. He knocked upon it and, receiving no response, called: "Bole! Bole!

matter?" Those in the salon heard this and ceased their work. Two of the menthe young man who had been with the two girls and one of the others-ran into the hall at a call from the tall man. He pounded upon the door again and called to Bole. Then the three apparently put their shoulders to the door: It hold and some one brought a bar or an ax or something to break it down. The panels crashed in and then the door burst open. With swearing and cries of alarm the three men broke into the little room. The others who had been in the salon-the three women and two girls and one of the men -had now gone into the hall, too, and

Why do you not open? What is the

left the large front room deserted. Jim crossed behind them into the salon.

Outside the house as well as within

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there was disturbance. It might mean that Sibert and his men had arrived; it might mean that the guards without, alarmed by the confusion within, were entering to investigate. In either case it was the moment in which Jim must act-the moment in which he must take his chance. He swept up a heap of letters from the larger table and, bundling them together, he thrust them under his/coat before any one turned

Then the person who turned was the young girl who had sat facing the Jim had made no noise which could have caused her to suspect his presence. She seemed to have realized before any of the others that the fact that Bole was bound meant that the one who had been Bole's prisoner must be free in the house. She spun about to the salon to protect the documents there, and, seeing Jim, she did not recoil: she cried to the others and ran

The rest, still much amazed, did ed alone upon Jim. He backed toward the nearest window and, pointing his revolver, tried to frighten her.

"Stop!" he warned her sharply. "Go fire!" and she rushed at him. He skipped back to the curtain over the window, and as she reached him

he fired. The firing did not frighten her. He had pointed the revolver far to one side to avoid all chance of hitting.

She saw this before he shot, and she laughed at him tauntingly as she seized his hand. He dropped the revolver and tried to throw her off, but she held him. A man rushed up to help her. It was the young man in evening clothes. Jim threw the girl back from him, and as the man came Jim caught him with a fist under the taw, but the man came on and grappled at the same moment that the girl tripped Jim, and he crashed back against the window, shattering the glass about him and the man who fought with him.

The girl cried out shrilly as the glass smashed on the floor. Then she stifled her cry, and as Jim struggled with his antagonist he felt the girl's small, tense hands seizing him. He was rolling on the floor smid the broken glass with the man who had grappled him when a pistol shot rang out in the

Another shot replied from beside the house. Now there were shouts all about, and a whistle blew. As Jim wrestled and rolled over below the window, from outside a man smashed in the rest of the glass and stepped in. A window farther down the room was burst open, and as another man appeared the lights in the salon went

In their place a flame flared suddenly from the center of the room and jumped from rug to table and to the hangings before the door, and Jim as he gasped for breath sucked in the fumes of gasoline.

(To Be Continued.)

The American lobster smack E. MacNichol, of Boston, was seized by the Canadian fisheries patrol boat "F" and taken into Yarmouth, charged with fishing within the three-mil limit.

Secretary Lane, member of the American Commission in conference with the Mexican representatives at New London, Conn., predicted a satisfactory agreement will be reached and the conference adjourn within two

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